



“AN ANALYSIS ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF SCHEDULED CASTES POPULATION IN TAJPUR VILLAGE, NORTH 24 PARGANAS IN WEST BENGAL”

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ABSTRACT

An important part of the people of West Bengal is Scheduled Castes. A large number of Scheduled Caste people are living in North 24 Pargana district of the state. They are lagging far behind from the general class people in the socio-economic status. Employment determines the social and economic conditions of livelihood. The socio-economic development of any region is mainly based on the level of education and employment. The Present paper is concerned with socio-economic background of Scheduled Castes population in Tajpur Village in Habra - 2 block in North 24 Pargana district in West Bengal. The basic information has been collected through the well prepared questionnaire and supplemented by secondary data. The total population of Tajpur Village is 4092. Among themselves 40% are Scheduled Castes people. The outcome of the study reveals that the percentage of men and women belonging to Scheduled Castes percentage are 21.40% and 18.60% respectively.

The education level of the area is not good. The literacy rate among women is far behind from Scheduled Castes men literacy rate. A large number of Scheduled Caste peoples of this area are unemployed. Most of are agricultural labourers. They live in non-concrete houses. Their sanitation system is very unhygienic. The study observed that the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes people of this area are very low.

KEYWORDS: Scheduled Castes, Socio-economic, Tajpur Village, Population

INTRODUCTION

The Word “Caste” has been derived from the Portuguese term “Casta” meaning race, family or lineage. M.N Srinivas defined “Caste” as hereditary usually localised group having a traditional association with and occasional and particular position in the local hierarchy of castes. Dr. Ambedkar has given the most importance of economic inequality in the formation of various classes, ethnic group in Indian society. He said “The caste system has been legitimised through shastras. So it has religious sanctions and there is no sphere of life which is not regulated by the principle of graded inequality”. According to Sri H. Risely “A caste may be defined as a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, claiming common descent”.

In the nineteenth century the British government took important decisions for the department of this category of people. The Caste Disabilities Act was passed in 1850 to give the legal recognition to the oppressed Hindu community in India. In the 1935 the Simon Commission first used the term Scheduled Caste. The Indian Constitution recognised the people of this class in 1950. According to articles 366(24) of our Constitution Scheduled Castes means such caste, race or tribes or part of group with in such castes, race or tribes as are deemed under article 341 to be Scheduled Castes for the purpose of this Constitution.

According to 2011 Census of India there are about 20.14 crore (16.6%) Scheduled Castes population in India. This number in West Bengal is 2.14 crore (23.51 %). North 24 Pargana is

the most populous District in West Bengal. According to 2011 census, total population was 10009781. Among 21.67 % of the total population was Scheduled Castes. The average literacy rate of this district was 84.06 %.

The socio-economic status of the people of a region depend on their education. Lack of education and awareness has acted a major barrier in the development of the socio-economic status of the people of this area. Empirical evidences indicate development deficits and backwardness of Scheduled Castes in West Bengal. Employment is the key input in the economic and social growth. The main Scheduled Castes communities in the Tajpur Village are Namasudra, Dhoba, Methor, Chamar, Rishi etc. The main titles of this area are Mondal, Halder, Biswas, Saha (Sunri), Barui, Das, Sarkar, Mistry, Bapari etc.

As per 2011 Census of India Habra-2 CD Block had a total population of 1,76,490. There are 90,466 (51%) males and 86,024 (49%) females population. Scheduled Castes members are 31,665 (17.94 %). Tajpur is one of the oldest Village of Habra-2 Block. The total population of this village is 4092 (2011 Census). Tajpur Village is located in Habra-2 Block in North 24 Parganas. The total geographical area Tajpur Village is 160.06 hectares. It is under Guma no-2 Gram Panchayat. Total population of Guma area is 12,025 (2011 Census). Out of total population 4092, male population is 2125, while female population is 1967. Literacy rate of Tajpur Village is 74.36 %, out of which 79.06 % males and 69.29 % females are literate.

OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To assess the socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes population of the Tajpur Village.
2. To investigate the regional patterns of employment of this area.
3. To find out the obstacles of economic conditions of the study area.
4. To suggest remedial measures for why to avoid Backwardness.

DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The study has been on the basis of Primary as well as secondary data. The primary data regarding population, educational and occupational condition of Scheduled Castes obtained with the help of well prepared questionnaire. The secondary data has been collected from several secondary sources like government reports ,published records, caste reports etc. Tajpur Village under Habra-2 CD Block has been selected for field survey and 295 household have been surveyed for field survey. I have used lottery method for select sample house.

STUDY AREA

Tajpur Village is located in Habra-2 ,Block of North 24 Pargana in West Bengal. The village is situated 18.9 km away from district headquarters Barasat and just 1 km away from Habra-2 B.D.O office. It is under Guma no-2 Gram Panchayat. According to the 2011 Census of India Habra-2 CD Block has a total population of 176490,out of which 1,40,675 are rural and 35,135 are urban. Guma is located within 22.83 degree North and 88.63 degree East. The total geographical area of Tajpur Village is 160.06 hectares and Village code is 322969. Tajpur has a total population of 4092 people, out of which male population is 2125, while female population is 1967. The pin code of this locality is 743704.

DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE

According to 2011 Census Reports, Tajpur Village has a total of 998 households and total population is 4092.The males and females population are 2125 and 1967 respectively. In 2023 the total population of Tajpur Village is between 4583 and 4992 and total households residing are 998. The average sex ratio of Tajpur Village is 926 which is lower than West Bengal state average of 950. Tajpur Village has higher literacy rate compared to West Bengal. In 2011, average literacy rate of Tajpur Village was 83.64%, compared to 76.26% of West Bengal. Male literacy rate was 87.91% and female literacy rate was 78.92%. In 2022 there were 4583 inhabitants in Tajpur Village. Total literate people were 3043 in 2022. Among themselves 1680 were male and 1363 were female. People living in Tajpur Village depend on multiple skills. Total workers are 1611 out of which male and female are 1338 and 273 respectively. Total 432 cultivators are depended on agricultural farming. Among themselves 405 are male and 27 are women. 209 people works in agricultural land as a labour in Tajpur Village. Out of these 204 are men and 5 are women. The total number of Scheduled Caste population in this village is 1196. Out of which men are 622 and women are 574. Scheduled Castes constitutes 29.23 %, while Scheduled Tribes are 0.15% of total population in Tajpur Village.

TAJPUR POPULATION

Particular	Total	Male	Female
Population	4092	2125	1967
Child (0 - 6 years)	454	214	240
Scheduled Castes	1196	622	574
Scheduled Tribes	6	3	3
Literacy	83.64%	87.91%	78.92 %
Workers	1611	1338	273

Source: Census of India, 2011

Table 01

Socio-Economic Status of Scheduled Castes Population in Tajpur Village.

There are three localities namely Nabapally, Ghoshpara, and Muslimpara in Tajpur Village. Nabapally and Ghoshpara localities have been selected for sample survey. There are no Scheduled Castes population in Muslimpara. Only Nabapally is the Scheduled Castes dominated area of Tajpur Village.

Sample Household and Selected Localities of Tajpur Village.

Localities	Sample of Total Household.	Sample of Total Population	Sample of SCs Household	Sample of SCs Population	Percentage of SCs
Naba-pally	215	1275	181	1086	85.17
Ghosh-para	80	320	19	133	41.56
Total	295	1595	200	1219	76.42

Source: Field Survey

Table 02

Educational Status

Education is the most important instrument of socio-economic development of any region. Education is capable of rapidly improving the socio-economic status of a region.

Localities	Liter- ate	Popu- lation	Illiter- ate	Popu- lation	Liter- acy	Rate (%)	Illiter- ate	Rate (%)
	Male	Fe- male	Male	Fe- male	Male	Fe- male	Male	Fe- male
Naba-pally	167	150	62	76	72.9	66.4	27.1	33.6
Ghosh-para	54	38	16	25	67.5	60.0	32.5	40.0
Total	221	188	78	101	70.2	63.2	29.8	36.3

Source: Field Survey.

Table 03: Literacy Rate of Scheduled Castes population of Sample Household.

West Bengal's literacy rate is 76 percent, which is higher than national average. Scheduled Caste literacy rate in West Bengal is 69 percent. In North 24 Pargana district this is 80 percent. The Scheduled Caste population is well aware of education but due to poor financial situation and lack of basic facilities, they are unable to move towards the higher education for their better future. The main two Scheduled Caste areas of Tajpur Village

are Nabapally and Ghoshpara. At Nabapally, out of 317 literate people 167 are men and 150 are female. The literacy rate of men and female are 72.9 % and 66.4% respectively. The overall literacy rate of Scheduled Caste peoples are 70.02 % for men and 63.2 % for female. The overall illiteracy rate of this areas are 29.8 % for men and 36.3 % for female (Table-03).

Localities	Lower Primary	Upper Primary	Second-ary	Higher Second-ary	Techni-cal	U.G	P.G
Nabapally	55	61	132	93	22	25	05
Ghoshpara	26	29	72	45	08	13	01
Total	81	90	204	138	30	38	06
Percentage	13.7	15.2	34.6	23.1	5.0	6.4	1.0

Source : Field Survey

Table 04: Educational Level of Scheduled Caste Population of Sample Household.

The table- 04 is showing that the education label of Scheduled Caste population of the Tajpur Village. In the term of education level women are far behind than men in Tajpur Village. They are unable to move towards the higher education for their poor financial conditions and lack of basic facilities. Only 1.0 % of the total Scheduled Caste population has post graduation degree in this area. Only 6.4 % population hold graduation degree. Total Percentage of Technical education is 5.0 % only. The people with higher secondary degree is 23.1% and secondary is 34.6 %. The survey shown the poor presence in primary education in the study area. The upper primary with 15.2% and lower primary whith 13.7 % literacy rate shows the educational backwardness of this village .

Income Structure

The actual condition of livelihood presents the real position of a society. Income of a family is closely related to their development. The Scheduled Caste community living in the two localities namely Nabapally and Ghoshpara are far behind from adequate family Income.

Localities	Upto 10,000	10,000 - 20,000	20,000 - 30,000	30,000 - above
Nabapally	42	26	17	05
Ghoshpara	15	21	13	07
Total	57	47	30	12
Percentage	39.0	32.0	20.5	8.2

Source: Field Survey

Table 05: Monthly Income Structure of Scheduled Caste Population.

Asper the field survey 39% of the Scheduled Castes households has an average monthly income less than Rs. 10,000 and 32% of the household belongs to the income group between the Rs. 10,000 - 20,000. On the other hand only 20.5% household belongs to the income group between Rs. 20,000 - 30,000. Only 8.2% of the household has an average monthly income more than 30,000 Indian rupees (Table-05). This data proves that most of the household are very poor.

Localities	La-bour	Farm-ing	Mason	Hawker	Business	Govt. Service
Naba-pally	85	43	16	26	34	06
Ghosh-para	29	16	06	02	29	03
Total	114	59	22	28	63	09
Percent-age	38.6	20.0	7.4	9.4	21.3	3.0

Source: Field Survey

Table 06: Occupational Status of Scheduled Castes in Tajpur Villagers.

The professional position presents the development of the people of a region. The financial conditions of the people of this region is not very good. The field survey reflects that there are 38.6% labour class people. Out of 210 Scheduled Caste people at Nabapally, 85 are labour and at the Ghoshpara this number is 29. In other side 20.0% livelihood of the people is farming. Out of 295 sample household 59 are farmers. Most of them are share - cultivators. The percentage of mason of this area is 7.4 . Out of 22 mason 16 lives at Nabapally and 06 at Ghoshpara. There are many peoples, who is called hawker . As per field survey 9.4% of Tajpur Villagers are Hawker. On the other side 21.3% peoples are business man. Out of 85 household at Ghoshpara, 29 are businessman. The presence of very few people can be notice here in the Government Service. Out of 210 household at Nabapally, only 06 are in Government service and at Ghoshpara only 03 are here out of 85 households (Table-06).

Sanitation Facilities

Sanitation conditions in this are is not satisfactory. Only 21% of the total 295 household have good Sanitation system in Tajpur Village. In Nabapally area most of are labour and cultivators . Out of 210 household at Nabapally, 180 of themselves having poor sanitation system. There is a provision of adequate toilets for a number of households initiated by Awas Yojana especially at Ghoshpara. 30 out of 85 household at Ghoshpara have concrete sanitation system in this study area.

Drinking Water Facilities

The source of drinking water within the locality is very low. There are 4092 people in this village but drinking Water system is not satisfactory. There are only 4 deep tubewells, one "Swajal dhara Prakalpa" in this area. Only 08 % Scheduled Caste household of this locality own source of drinking water within their premises. 265 out of 295 Scheduled Caste families depend on the out side source of drinking water. Only 12 Scheduled Caste households have Sub-Marshall system for water in the Tajpur Village .

Localities	Source	of	Water.	
	Pond	Tubewells	Swajal dhara	Sub - Marshall
Nabapally	05	19	180	07
Ghoshpara	03	10	80	05
Total	08	29	260	12

Source: Field Survey.

Table 07: Drinking Water Facilities of the Sample Household.

Table-07 is showing that, there are 08 household, 05 at Nabapally and 03 at Ghoshpara, they depend on pond water. Only 19 households at Nabapally have own tubewell for their drinking water. 80 households at Ghoshpara depend on the Swajal dhara Prakalpa for the use of the water. Only 07 household at Nabapally have Sub-Marshall system for source of Water. Number of Sub-Marshall find at Ghoshpara is 05 only.

Picture of Electricity Using

The Scheduled Caste in West Bengal have lower share in electricity use for lighting. It's 41 percent among Scheduled Castes household in according to 2011 Census Reports. The picture of Tajpur Village is not more different than the above mentioned information. According to field survey 15% of the total population do not have access to electricity. 81 percent of the electricity users consume less than 1 unit of electricity daily.

LPG Use for Cooking

The use LPG gas for cooking indicate the level of socio-economic development of a region. According to 2011 Census data, only 8 percent household among Scheduled Caste use LPG for cooking. On the other side 18 percent of overall population use LPG for cooking. In the Tajpur Village 22% of the Scheduled Caste household, use LPG for cooking. 51 out of 210 household of Nabapally use LPG for cooking. At Ghoshpara 14 out of 85 household use LPG gas for cooking their food. This picture is showing the underdeveloped socio-economic situation of the study area.

Institutional Delivery

The institutional delivery reflects the degree of awareness in a area ,specifically for Scheduled Caste dominated area of Tajpur Village. Lack of education is one of the major reason for lagging behind in terms of health. People here follow various superstition in the field of health. According to the field survey 7% of children are born within the home at Nabapally, at Ghoshpara this number is 5%. The 2% new born baby of this region die within six months due to various birth problems.

MAJOR FINDING OF THE STUDY

The following points are the major findings of the study:

1. The Tajpur Village is dominate by Scheduled Caste community. They are far behind regarding socio-economic conditions.
2. They are not benefited by the reservation policies due to lack of higher education. There are many false Scheduled Caste certificate holders.
3. The literacy rate of Scheduled Caste in selected area are less compared to other categories of people. Women literacy rate is lower than general class women of the study area.
4. Villagers are also suffered from low family Income, poverty, low property ownership in the study area.
5. This study has proved that the number of population without job is too much. For this reason dependency ratio is very high. Most of the Scheduled Caste peoples are agricultural labour, share cultivators, mason and hawker. They don't have their own land . Seasonal

unemployment is a big problem in Tajpur Village.

6. The conditions of houses and other facilities are very poor. They don't have their own source of drinking water.
7. This study find that the sanitation system of this area are very unhygienic.
8. Due to illiteracy and poverty, infant mortality and maternal mortality in the region are very high.

SUGGESTIONS

There are several suggestions that can be made by reviewing the whole study:

1. Government will have to take effective steps to eliminate educational backwardness.
2. Non governmental organization can come forward to make the students who are being deprived of education for poverty on the way to higher education.
3. Financial assistance should be given to the Scheduled Caste students for admission fees, hostel fees, book and ancillary expenses for higher education.
4. They need to be made aware of their Constitutional privileged by wide publicity through mass media, like T.V, News Paper, Posters etc.
5. Government should provide food security for Scheduled Caste people who living below poverty line.
6. Unemployed people of Scheduled Caste community can form self- help group for improvement their livelihood.
7. Government should provide housing for every Scheduled Caste below poverty line households.
8. To maintain good health and hygiene, proper sanitation facilities should be implemented in collaboration with the Guma No-2 Gram Panchayat.

CONCLUSION

Even after so many years of independence we are still seeing inequality in development in India. On the one side, the development of this country has reached its peak, but on the other side, a large number of people in the Indian society cannot meet their basic needs. The situation of Scheduled Caste population in this country is not as expected. The position of Scheduled Caste people of West Bengal is almost the same. The picture in the village is even worse. The socio-economic status of Scheduled Caste people in Tajpur Village is lower. The picture of education, health, institutional delivery, employment status, source of drinking water, sanitation facilities, LPG using, use of electricity, economic conditions of Tajpur Scheduled Caste Villagers are far behind than the general categories of people in this region.

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